

News aRound the Hill

A Community Newsletter for Round Hill, Virginia

March 2021

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Town Offers COVID Repayment Plans for Utilities

The Town of Round Hill is currently continuing to offer COVID-19 Utility Repayment Plans to customers who are 30 days or more past due on their water/sewer bills and have been impacted by COVID-19.

This policy is in accordance with Virginia's moratorium on utility disconnections for delinquent residential utility customer accounts that was put in place in November. This moratorium will continue until the governor determines that the economic and public health conditions have improved such that the disconnection moratorium is no longer needed or until at least 60 days after the state of emergency ends, whichever is sooner.

To be eligible for the COVID-19 Utility Repayment Plan, a customer must attest that he/she has experienced financial hardship resulting from the COVID-19

pandemic. Customers who qualify for the repayment plan will not be charged any new deposits, down payments, late fees, interest charges, or penalties, and none shall accrue, during the moratorium. Customers can pay amounts in as little as six months or up to 24 months, depending upon individual circumstances.

Applying for the COVID-19 Utility Repayment Plan does not mean that your bill is not due or that the amounts owed will be waived or forgiven. Rather, customers have more time to pay bills that they are unable to pay due to COVID-19.

The act that established the moratorium includes a provision that may exempt the Town of Round Hill from having to comply with the statewide moratorium; this exemption may be discussed at an upcoming Council meeting.

HOW THE PAYMENT PLAN WORKS

1. Submit the online application or download the PDF and mail, drop off or email it to Utilities Billing Customer Service (rhutility@roundhillva.org)

2. Choose from one of the following plans to pay your past due balance: six-month plan equals three payments, 12-month plan equals six payments, and 24-month plan equals 12 payments.

3. The payment plan charge AND the current bill charge must be paid in full by the due date to avoid cut-off. No extensions will be approved.

To apply online or download the PDF application, go to <https://www.roundhillva.org/covid-19-dashboard/pages/roundhill-covid-19-utility-repayment-plan>.

For more information, please call the Round Hill Utility Department at 540-338-4772 ext 2.

Main Street Project to Cause Water Service Interruptions

Outages to be Scheduled, Residents Notified in Advance

Work on the Franklin Park Trail and Main Street Enhancement Projects within Round Hill has been delayed over the past several months due to weather conditions and issues

identified with the relocation of the water line on East Loudoun Street.

Work is scheduled to resume in early March and will include scheduled water service interruptions to customers in the Lake Point, Newberry Crossing and Falls Place communities between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. As the construction project heads west toward Main Street, there will be two additional water outage events scheduled impacting residents in that area.

The Town will provide advance notice to customers, and bottled water will be made available. Loudoun County Fire and Rescue and

the Round Hill Fire Department will be notified and will add a tanker task force during any period where hydrants are out of service.

There will also be a lane closure on East Loudoun Street while crews are working, and motorists are urged to use caution while travelling through the area.

Scheduled water outages should not cause any brown water issues. However, if any water clarity problems do occur, residents may clean out their service lines by turning on a single cold-water faucet without an aerator—such as a bathtub—and allowing it to run until the water is clear. This may take several minutes

See **OUTAGES** next page



A sign on Main Street warns of construction work ahead.

OUTAGES

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to as much as an hour depending on the length and design of the line.

Instances of discolored water are common after flushing of water mains or a line shutdown in a public water system, especially a system supplied by wells. The brown water may last up to 48 hours.

When line flushing occurs, the sediments that have settled out in the water pipes are dislodged by the water moving through the pipes at a higher rate than normal. These particles will move about in the system until they resettle. Discoloration does not mean the water is unsafe, it just means there are still some particles that didn't get flushed out.

The Town will provide updates on the Town website and Facebook page, and through Alert Loudoun. Residents can also call 540-338-7878 or email mhynes@roundhillva.org with

any questions regarding the service interruption.

Town Staff encourages all residents to sign up for Alert Loudoun—the notification system Loudoun County uses to send citizens emergency information, news releases, traffic information, weather alerts, and more—as a communication tool to find out about any emergency in Round Hill or in the greater Loudoun County region.

Subscribers to the Alert Loudoun system may register to receive alerts that affect not only their home address, but also their work location, their children's day-care provider, their children's school, or their parents' home, etc. Alert Loudoun also gives subscribers the ability to customize how they receive information—by text, email, and/or mobile app. For more information on how to sign up visit: <https://www.loudoun.gov/alert>.

TIPS FOR MINIMIZING IMPACTS OF WATER SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS

- Consider taking showers and baths the night before or prior to 8:00 a.m.
- Consider washing clothes and dirty dishes the night before the water outage.
- Consider using disposable plates, cups, and silverware to reduce the number of dirty dishes.
- Consider pulling extra water to flush toilets during the outage. A bucket or large pan of water poured into the toilet will flush it in the event of an emergency or outage.
- Fill the bathtub before the outage (for flushing and other non-potable purposes). Please be careful if you have young children around a full bathtub.



PHOTO COURTESY HOMETOWN FESTIVAL COMMITTEE

SPRING FESTIVALS POSTPONED

Due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organizers of both the Round Hill Hometown Festival and the Appalachian Trail Festival have made the difficult decision to postpone the spring festivals until later in the fall.

The Hometown Festival is tentatively rescheduled for Saturday, Oct. 9, 2021. Planning will begin in mid-summer. Email info@hometownfestival.org to volunteer to help plan the event.

The Hometown Festival's traditional Memorial Ceremony to honor veterans will be held virtually over Memorial Day weekend.

The Appalachian Trail Festival has not yet determined a date for this year's event. More information on this event will be shared later this spring.

LOUDOUN COUNTY CONTINUES RESIDENTIAL UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM THROUGH JUNE

Residents of Loudoun County who have experienced a loss of wages due to COVID-19 may apply for help to pay their essential utilities, including electric, water, sewer, gas, propane/oil, and firewood used to heat the home. Assistance is capped at \$1,750 per household, and households may request assistance for more than one utility. This assistance can be used to pay past-due utility bills and current-month utility payments.

Eligibility criteria include:

- A household in Loudoun County that is a current utility customer.
- All utility payments must have been paid in full as of March 31, 2020. Eligible payments include past-due April 2020 to current bills only.
- Applicant can demonstrate a hardship as a result of COVID-19.

The County's program will continue operating until June 30, 2021, or until funds run out. Residential customers may call the County's COVID-19 Emergency Fund and Helpline at 703-669-5040.

ANNUAL BUSINESS LICENSE RENEWALS

Businesses operating in the corporate limits of the Town of Round Hill are required to have an annual business license. Renewal applications were mailed to existing businesses on Feb. 22 and are due by March 22. For more information or to request a business license application, visit www.roundhillva.org or call the Town Office at 540-338-7878.



PHOTO FOR NEWS AROUND THE HILL

Round Hill Mayor Scott Ramsey kayaks on Sleeter Lake last summer.

SLEETER LAKE PARK OPENS FOR 2021 SEASON

Sleeter Lake Park, located at 17749 Lakefield Road, will be open to the public from March 1 to Nov. 27. The park opens at 7:00 a.m. daily. Closing times change throughout the season and are posted below. They can also be found on the Town's website (www.roundhillva.org), at the park, and on the sign at the bottom of Lakefield Road.

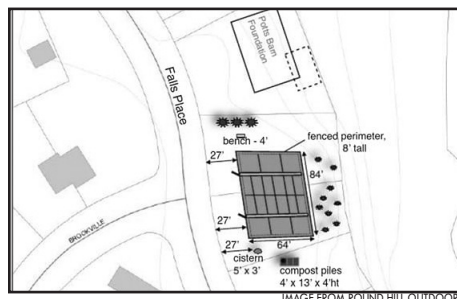
The 11-acre park features picnic areas with tables and grills, canoe and kayak storage, a soft-launch boat ramp, and an extensive shoreline for catch-and-release fishing. Swimming or wading is not permitted.

Currently all kayak storage spots are filled, but the Town is developing additional storage racks that are anticipated to be available by Memorial Day. To request a spot on the waiting list, contact the Town Office.

Gate Closing Schedule 2021	
Date	Closing Time
March 1 st	6:00PM
March 14 th (daylight savings)	7:00PM
April 2 nd	7:30PM
April 30 th	8:00PM
May 22 nd	8:30PM
August 16 th	8:00PM
September 6 th	7:30PM
September 24 th	7:00PM
October 11 th	6:30PM
November 7 th (daylight savings)	5:00PM
November 27 th	4:30PM

VIRTUAL ARBOR DAY TREE PLANTING CEREMONY

Round Hill will continue its strong history of Town beautification efforts and preservation of the urban canopy through a virtual Arbor Day ceremony. On Friday, April 30, Mayor Scott Ramsey and a group of local Cub Scouts will plant a tree at Niels Poulsen Park. To ensure proper social distancing, the tree planting will be by invitation only and the event will be broadcast live through the Town's Facebook page. For more information about ways to get involved with Arbor Day efforts, visit arborday.org.



A plat for the garden from 2009.

ROUND HILL OUTDOORS COMMITTEE TO REVITALIZE TOWN'S COMMUNITY GARDEN

Round Hill Outdoors Committee is excited to reintroduce the Round Hill Community Garden. Originally established in 2009, the garden has been revitalized by volunteers from Round Hill Outdoors, Virginia Master Gardeners and the community.

Through this garden, organizers hope to foster a love for gardening within the community, help maintain soil and amenities, develop special projects, support public relations efforts, and network with local groups and individuals.

The garden is located at the entrance to Falls Place off of East Loudoun Street and will offer ready-to-plant garden plots, on-site irrigation and water system, compost and storage. The garden is enclosed by an eight-foot mesh fence to protect against animals.

Several improvement projects are in the works for the inaugural season including new fencing, mulching pathways, and installing a rain barrel.

Garden organizers are also working to establish a mentorship program to help garden enthusiasts of all experience levels and offer speakers who can engage with gardeners on topics such as: Preparing Your Plot, Early Seeds to Plant, Beyond Pesticides, etc.

For more information or to get involved, contact Danni Albright, Town Planner, at dalbright@roundhillva.org.

4TH ANNUAL APPALACHIAN TRAIL ART SHOW NOW ACCEPTING ENTRIES

The Round Hill Arts Center will be accepting entries for the 4th Appalachian Trail Art Show from March 12 to March 14, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Artwork submissions should celebrate the Appalachian Trail and the great outdoors. All ages are welcome to submit original individual works of art using a variety of mediums including drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, pottery, textile, and mixed media.

Due to COVID-19, there will be no reception; however, art will be displayed at the Round Hill Arts Center, located at 35246 Harry Byrd Highway, from March 19 through April 30 and on the Round Hill Outdoors website (<https://roundhill.at/>).

For more information and to register (\$5 fee), go to: <https://roundhill.at/art/>.



PHOTO COURTESY THE ROUND HILL OUTDOORS COMMITTEE

Artist Kathleen Howsave with her 2020 entry titled "A Zen Place."



PHOTO COURTESY THE ROUND HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Girl Scout Tessa Heffron created the Blessings Box at the RHUMC.

NEW RESOURCE TO ADDRESS LOCAL FOOD INSECURITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has left a large number of people with food insecurity. In response to the increased need for food, Round Hill United Methodist Church has installed a Blessings Box—a free-standing structure that contains non-perishable food items and is available 24/7 so people can access the food whenever they need it, even when the church's food pantry is not open.

The Blessings Box was developed and built by Tessa Heffron for her Girl Scout Silver Award, the Girl Scouts' second-highest award, which is earned through working at least 50 hours on a project that addresses a

need in the community.

"I really enjoyed working on a project that will give back to my local community," Heffron said. "Now we just need to make sure people who need it know about it."

As a member of Senior Girl Scout Troop 6287, Heffron relied on local donations from the Girl Scout Service Unit, RHUMC and local businesses. She conducted a food drive at the Safeway in Leesburg that collected over 200 pounds of food in one afternoon.

"Tessa's efforts allow us to expand a key mission area of our church," said RHUMC Pastor Daniel Wray. "Having the Blessings Box is an important part of expanding the work the Food Pantry does."

The RHUMC food pantry has served more than 30 families monthly over the past 10 years, providing a range of essential food and supplies for those who need it.

Items that are most needed include canned fruit; breakfast cereal; canned tuna, salmon and chicken; rice; cooking oil; pasta sauce (please, no glass jars); canned diced tomatoes and tomato sauce; nut butters and jelly, taco kits; and canned soups, stew and chili.

The Blessings Box is located in front of the RHUMC food pantry at 11 West Loudoun Street. Questions or offers of help can be directed to the RHUMC at rhumcfoodpantry@gmail.com.



PHOTO COURTESY MATTHEW SPEER

Matthew Speer presents Tammy Hines with a check for \$12,000.

COMMUNITY DONATES \$12,000 TO HELP TAMMY'S DINER

Over the course of 12 days in December, the Round Hill community rallied to raise \$12,000 to donate to help local business-owner Tammy Hines offset COVID-19 related losses in revenues from her diner in the middle of Round Hill.

The fundraiser was set up by a new regular to the diner, Matthew Speer, after he and his family learned of Hines' struggles. He created a GoFundMe page and promoted it through Facebook. The response was immediate and overwhelmingly positive.

Hines thanked Speer and the Round Hill community in a Facebook post, in which she said Speer "went above and beyond for me and my business. I just thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Speer presented Hines with the check, as well as a custom wooden American flag from Valor Home, in a small ceremony on Dec. 21.

ON THE AGENDA

Issues the Town Council and Planning Commission will address in the coming months include:

- Fiscal Year 2022 General Fund and Utility Fund Operating Budget, Capital Improvement Plan Budget, and Fee Schedule
- Water and Sewer Rate Study
- Future well site acquisition
- Upgrades to Sleeter Lake Park
- Town Expansion
- Parking Study
- Zoning ordinance amendments for non-conforming commercial lots
- Renovation of Utility plant offices

Upcoming Events

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| ► Town Council Meeting | Mar. 17/Apr. 21 |
| 7:30 p.m., Zoom | |
| ► Planning Commission | Apr. 6/May 4 |
| 7:00 p.m., Zoom | |
| ► Town Council Public Hearing | Apr. 7 |
| 7:30 p.m., Zoom; Topic: FY2022 Budget | |
| ► Town Council Work Session | May 5 |
| 7:30 p.m., Zoom | |

(Note: During COVID-19, electronic meeting participation is available; the link is available on the Town website, www.roundhillva.org/minutes-and-agendas.)